Universally Designing One-Stop Career Center Services: A Checklist
Elena Varney and
National Center on Workforce & Disability/Adult
Final Draft 3/18/03

One-Stop Career Centers serve a diverse range of customers. In order to meet the needs of this broad customer pool, Centers must facilitate access to self-directed services by providing them in a manner consistent with the principles of universal design. This is also consistent with the mandate that One-Stops be proactive in anticipating the needs of customers with various disabilities. When accomplished, job seekers with a wide range of learning styles, languages, educational levels, intelligences, and abilities will more likely benefit from Center services. This checklist serves as a tool to assist Centers with implementing a universal design approach to services within the various aspects of One-Stop services. To learn more about the concept of universal design and how it relates to One-Stop Career Centers, refer to Access for All Customers: Universal Design for One-Stops.

Welcoming Environment
☐ Consistently welcome visitors as they enter the Center, requesting that first-time users complete a registration form.

☐ Display signage that clearly indicates the availability of assistive technology and accommodations.

☐ Inform each customer that assistance in completing the registration form is available if preferred. Staff should make this offer to everyone, not just individuals they suspect may have a disability. Individuals may not be able to read the form or write the necessary information for a variety of reasons.

☐ Display clear, visible signage that directs customers to the location of resources. This includes staff to whom questions should be directed, books, computer programs, telephones, availability of accommodations, etc. Clear signage is an essential tool for orienting customers to what is available.

☐ Have information available on how to use public transportation to access the Center both on the web site and at the front desk.

☐ Maintain electronic files of standard orientation and intake materials, and materials provided in various workshops. Upon request, provide to customers in advance.

☐ Provide the option of registering and/or signing up for orientation/classes online prior to coming in so that orientation can be accomplished upon first visit. For individuals who

use specialized transportation services, being able to complete activities through the phone or web will reduce unnecessary trips.

☐ Have a staff listing posted that includes photographs of staff. Individuals may have forgotten the names of staff they worked with and this visual reminder will allow them to connect with the person they have worked with before.

Intake
☐ If a person needs assistance in filling out registration or intake forms, use private space, where the individual's responses will not be overheard.

☐ Indicate that alternate methods of completing intake forms are available. Have the option for people to complete the intake form electronically or to take the form home with them to complete and bring back.

☐ Offer several options for completing intake forms, and indicate that individuals can use the method with which they are most comfortable. These methods can include: completion of a paper form on their own; having a staff member assist them in completion of the paper form; completing the form electronically at a work station; or taking the paper form home with them to return upon completion.

Orientation
Group orientations are held in some Centers and allow new customers to learn about the range of services available at the Career Center and how to access these services. Components of orientation may include a review of the Center calendar where there are listings of workshops and special events. At the completion of the Orientation, staff can conduct a tour of the Center with new customers to reinforce what they learned in the orientation.

☐ Provide orientations in a room with ample seating, allowing space for wheelchair mobility.

☐ Have the speaker sit or stand in an area visible to all participants. He/she should maintain a strong voice volume, articulating clearly for people who supplement hearing with lip-reading.

☐ Provide an overview of the facility upon start of orientation, including the location of restrooms and water.

☐ Provide a written and oral overview of the orientation. This includes the time frame, what topics will be covered, and when questions should be asked. An outline like this

will help people organize the information, serve as a reminder of what was covered, and may reduce an individual's anxiety about whether their question will be addressed.

☐ If services are available that are specifically targeted towards people with disabilities, consistently provide this information verbally and in writing to all customers. Include in this information steps for accessing these resources. In discussing these services, indicate that, while people with disabilities may find them helpful, there is no requirement that they use any services specifically for people with disabilities (including public Vocational Rehabilitation). Clarify that they can still use any other One-Stop services for which they are eligible, whether or not they decide to use services targeted to people with disabilities (including VR).

☐ State that there are additional resources available to people with disabilities and identify the steps to access them. Define the term vocational rehabilitation, indicating that they are an additional resource, and that One-Stop services are provided to people with disabilities with or without assistance from vocational rehabilitation.

☐ Any forms or materials that contain personal information regarding individual customers, which One-Stop staff may have with them during orientation, should be kept concealed so that attendees cannot see them. This includes applications and forms that have been completed during orientation.

☐ If the staff member conducting the orientation observes any missing information from applications and forms, this should be discussed in private with the individual, and not in front of the group.

☐ Provide information regarding the self-service design of the Center. Let people know that customer assistance will be provided as needed to facilitate utilization of services.

☐ Provide a listing of assistive technology available at the center, both verbally and in writing.

☐ Provide an extensive, private orientation to the Center if needed.

☐ Be specific as to what steps customers must take in order to access the services discussed. For example, when customers must "register for classes early", how, where and when do they register? How do people determine if they are eligible for additional services beyond the core services available to all customers? Provide these steps in verbal and written formats.

☐ Ask participants periodically if they have any questions or would like information clarified.

☐ Provide a tour upon completion of the orientation, which includes center facilities and equipment available (e.g. fax machine, phones, copy machine, and internet access). Point out any assistive technology available.

☐ Have staff consider creating an audio/video-taped version of the orientation. This would be helpful for those who need to periodically review the orientation information and/or retain it at their own pace.

Calendar

☐ Have a monthly calendar of events, with copies available at the front desk and available throughout the public areas of the One-Stop.

☐ Provide orientation days/times on the monthly calendar.

☐ Post the monthly calendar on the Career Center web site, including dates, times, and sign-up option for easy access by people with mobility/transportation issues.

☐ Include all monthly calendar and classes on the web site.

☐ Use clear language on the calendar, describing events, services, hours of operation, and holidays. Avoid use of jargon or abbreviations that customers may not understand. If abbreviations must be used due to space issues within the calendar, include a guide to those abbreviations.

☐ Identify the target audience for each class/workshop offered and note on calendar.

☐ Indicate that people signing up for a workshop should request accommodations and/or information in alternative formats prior to attending. Staff may need to identify a specific time period prior to trainings by which requests must be received. This is particularly important if it will require advance scheduling, as in the case of booking a sign language interpreter.

Workshops

☐ Identify early in the presentation that questions are welcome throughout the workshop. In the event that new information is generated during the workshop, provide it in various formats. For example, state new ideas in addition to writing them on the flip chart. (e.g. web sites, phone numbers, and resources identified).

☐ Use concrete, basic language that is easily understood on handouts and throughout the presentation. Re-word current handouts that are abstract and/or require a higher educational level to understand.

☐ Verbalize information from all of the handouts provided to facilitate learning by people with vision impairments, people who do not read, and/or people who may get distracted or over-stimulated.

☐ Offer assistance with completing tasks as needed. This applies to resume writing workshops, skills assessments, etc.

☐ Supplement abstract concepts with visual aids when possible (i.e. showing "text heavy" resume vs. good use of "white space").

☐ Define terms and concepts that may not be familiar to all (e.g. networking, marketing, recruiter, affirming language, job fair, temp agencies, etc.).

☐ Have available a supply of cassette recorders and tapes, and make them available to attendees to tape workshops, so they can review information later if they would like.

☐ Role-plays are an effective way for experiential learners to benefit from a workshop. When providing the opportunity for role-plays, do so in a voluntary manner, so as not to induce unnecessary stress on individuals who do not do well in group/impromptu situations. Breaking the larger group into smaller groupings, may make it more comfortable for people to role-play.

☐ Consider creating an audio and/or videotaped version of the orientation and workshops provided. Offer these as an option for enhanced understanding of the information provided during the session. Some customers may benefit from referring back to the information as needed. Sessions taped in alternate languages may also prove beneficial.

Print Material

☐ Provide page numbers on all documents. This approach allows instructors to refer to specific sections of the handout, which may be helpful to people who have trouble following all of the information verbally.

☐ Supplement text with illustrative graphics (e.g. a labeled diagram of a cover letter and it's various components).

☐ Use a minimum of 12-point font size on all calendars and handouts. A 16-point font is preferred whenever possible.

Resource Room

☐ Provide clear, color-coded signs for each section, equipment or assistive technology.

☐ Use the technology available through America's Jobline for individuals who can not read, but can listen to job postings over the phone. Individuals can call

1-800-441-5748 and follow prompts to menu choices. More information about America's Jobline is available at http://www.nfb.org/jobline/enter.htm.

☐ Install speech output software in as many work stations as possible. Include headphones with each work station. The use of this software benefits a wide variety of individuals, including those who are blind or visually impaired, individuals with reading challenges (including those with learning disabilities. limited literacy, etc.), as well as individuals who, because of their learning style, prefer hearing information rather than reading it.

☐ Offer demonstrations of equipment as well as written instructions. Written instructions for computer programs and functions can include graphics and picture icons that also appear on the computer. This will help individuals match the text with what they are seeing on the screen.

☐ At each work station, provide clearly posted instructions regarding how the work station can be customized to individual user needs and preferences, including assistive technology.

☐ Ensure that videos have closed captioning. Closed captioning will benefit people who cannot hear, as well as those who have limited English proficiency. For some people, the combination of spoken and written words will be beneficial.

☐ Use a color-coding system to help make it easier for individuals to find resource materials. For example, all resume development materials could be located in red binders and interview guidelines in green binders.

☐ Compile a "low tech" toolkit for the resource room that customers can use to help them organize their materials. This includes rulers, color dots, post-it notes of various colors, and pen grips.

This is a product of the Metro North Regional Employment Board, Malden, MA Customized Employment Project, funded by the US Department of Labor/Office of Disability Employment Policy.